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FURTHER TEN YEAR CELEBRATION STATEMENTS

In the last issue we reported Y. T. Wu's article on "A Glorious Ten Years" from the September 21 Tien Feng. There are a number of other articles in that issue of Tien Feng which should be mentioned, most of them pursuing the same subject.

Bishop Robin Chen (Episcopal) has an article entitled "We Have Received True Democratic Liberty." Most of it is in very general terms, extolling the guarantees of freedom of religious belief in the Constitution, and praising the Communist Party for its leadership in economic and political development. "The Party has consistently held to its policy of freedom of religious belief, and has helped us to be liberated from the shackles of imperialism, constantly educating and training us in patriotism and socialism, helping us to purify the church and lead it along the road of socialism, thus making us one with the People, ready to go forward together."

The next article is by a YMCA Secretary, Tsai Fu-tsu of Chengtu. Much of it is devoted to stressing the same points that Y. T. Wu and Bishop Chen had made, but he adds in regard to Szechuan, "Among Szechuan Christians I know of more than fifty persons who have been elected to membership in people's congresses on either the local, county or provincial level. Since 1951 the taxes on church buildings and on property used by the churches have been remitted, and the Party and the Government have cared for sick and aged church workers, making their life very pleasant. I myself from 1950 on have been either a deputy of a People's Congress or of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, thus achieving a glorious position in the Government."

Independent Church leader Hsieh Yung-ch'in pursues the same theme in "A Great Ten Years." Of himself he says that his thinking at first was very backward, so that he did not understand the Party's policy. "But the Party patiently instructed me, giving me opportunities for study in Shanghai and Peking, in factory and on the farm, thus showing me how to combine theory and practice, so that I was able to advance from a position of semi-ignorance to the place where I could distinguish right and wrong." He is especially impressed by the way in which the three five-year plans are being foreshortened.

The next article is by Rev. Cheng Hsi-san, Methodist of Tientsin. He describes himself as "an old man of over sixty, who has seen many governmental changes, and has in the past cherished many illusions, only to have them destroyed. The bitter taste of the old China is something which the young man in China today can hardly understand." He goes on to speak of the way in which the Christian Church has thrown itself whole-heartedly in the Great Leap Forward, and says, "Last year, when the whole country was making its Great Leap Forward, we church workers on the basis of an awakened understanding took part in the Movement. What a glorious

Issued bi-weekly to keep mission boards and missionaries informed on Christian work in China. Information from Chinese church magazines and other Chinese sources is passed on as objectively as possible, with a minimum of interpretation. When interpretation is necessary, it is enclosed in parentheses as the comment of the editor. ANNUAL RATES: Domestic, $2.50; Overseas, Firstclass $4.00, Secondclass $3.00. Airmail $5.00 in 15¢ zone, $7.00 in 25¢ zone.

thing it was when we found ourselves at one with the workers of China, how happy we were to find that we could be fellow-workers in the building up of a socialist China.

"On Sunday when we went to the house of God, our hearts naturally raised themselves in praise to God saying, 'Lord, Thou are near to us and wholly living within our hearts.' For then we realized that all the sale of sheep and cattle and doves, and the putting on of sheepskins by wolves, had been purged from our temples, and so we were able to say, 'How happy it is for brethren to be able to dwell together in unity'."

Dr. T.C. Chao writes on "Congratulations for Ten Years of National Construction." His article says nothing about the church, but concentrates on the material advancement of these years. After a strong statement of this advance he says, "So let imperialism and all our enemies tremble before us."

YMCA Secretary Liu Liang-mo (Y. T. Wu's right hand man) has a reminiscent article about the great events of 1949. He says that in August of 1949 he returned to China after having been away ten years, during which time the country had gone through untold sufferings. He went first to Peking, and was delighted to be chosen as a member of the Consultative Conference which met in September to pass on the Common Platform. After describing the representative character of the 600 members of this Conference, he says, "We representatives of religion expressed our complete and unqualified approval of the Common Platform, and issued a statement saying, 'The principle of freedom of religious belief stands firm in the Common Platform. We prize this freedom and will not abuse it. Moreover we will do our utmost to purge our religious institutions of their corrupt practices and their connections with feudalism and imperialism'." He recalls the adoption of the five-starred flag, and then moves on to the official inauguration of the new government on October 1, 1949, which he describes in detail. He concludes with the reminder that though the Church has made great progress under the Three Self Patriotic Movement, it must not relax its vigilance, for imperialism is still hoping to be able to make use again of the Christian Church for its own evil purposes.

The next article is of the sob story type, by a woman named Hu Kwei-chen. It is entitled "The Old Society Was Hell, The New Society Is Heaven." She tells her life story, how because of poverty her mother sold her as a "daughter-in-law" to a well-to-do woman who proved to be very heartless and oppressive, and then how her lot was improved through the new society.

There are a few more smaller articles in this series, and then Baptist preacher Ch'i Ch'ing-ts'ai concludes the series with a prayer appropriate to the occasion, thanking God for the blessings of the past ten years, and praying for His protection and guiding hand in the future.

FREEDOM OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF

The Red Flag, official journal of theoretical Communism in China, had an article in the July 16 number with this title, written by Ya Han-chang. It gives the following interpretation of the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religious belief: Religious belief is an individual's affair, an individual is at liberty to believe or disbelieve; every citizen has the freedom to embrace or not embrace a religious faith, to cherish this or that religion, to attach himself to this or that denomination of a religion, to adopt a religion though a disbeliever before, to be a disbeliever though a believer before.

He goes on to explain why it is that communists, who are atheists and believe no religion, should stand for freedom of religious belief. This policy, he says, is based on first, the scientific analysis of religious problems in the light of Marx-Leninism and the objective laws of development of religion itself, and secondly, on the interests of the proletarian revolution and socialist construction. On the first consideration Communists can afford to wait, for ultimately religion will die out of itself; on the second consideration freedom of religious belief is a sound policy for uniting believers and disbelievers, so that they will work together in socialist construction.

"The Party and the State have launched patriotic education deep into the ranks of the believers, enlightening and elevating their patriotic spirit. It was on such a basis that the Christians in our country launched the Three Self Patriotic Movement, and both the Protestants and

the Catholics consciously carried on an anti-imperialistic struggle, emancipating the two churches from the grip of imperialism. This symbolizes a great achievement for the Party and the State in its policy of freedom of religious belief. But it must be pointed out that freedom of religious belief is not to be confused with the employment of religion to pursue feudalist oppression and exploitation."

In developing the idea in the last sentence above, the author quotes extensively from Engels to prove that in Europe there was cruel oppression by religious establishments in Germany in the 16th century, and then goes on to picture a similar oppression by the religious overlords in Tibet. This kind of exploitation, he says, "they are resolutely determined to obliterate." But they make a distinction between the religious belief itself and this use of it for exploitation: while obliterating the latter they are careful to protect the former. And when they find "progressive elements in the upper strata of the clerical hierarchy who favor these reform measures and are willing to abandon oppression and exploitation," they have made appropriate arrangements for them "in respect of politics and livelihood." Even those who give up their privileges reluctantly, if they do give them up, are protected in the exercise of their religion.

Here he points out how much freer this system is than the system formerly prevailing in Tibet, where the individual had no freedom to secede from lamaism. He concludes with this paragraph: "After the eradication of the oppression and exploitation under the feudal system, there is still much work to be done for the full implementation of the policy of religious freedom. We should attain the stage where each person's faith is determined of his own free will without any outside interference or compulsion. In the meantime the unbelievers should be taught to respect religious belief and freedom of religious belief on the part of those patriotic, law-abiding believers and religious professionals. The rude attitude toward other people's religious faith should be resolutely curbed. Only such a program is conducive to the solidarity of the people, to the solidarity of the believers and unbelievers among the mass of people, and to the development of the enterprise of socialist construction."

MISSIONARY NEWS

Dr. Charles E. Perry, Protestant Episcopal missionary who taught History at St. John's University in Shanghai from 1931 to 1949, and since 1951 at St. Paul's University in Tokyo, died there in November, after a beating by two drunken students.

CHURCH NEWS

A reader has identified for us the Yen Chia-le (Caleb Yen) whom we referred to in the November 23 Bulletin. He is one of the younger leaders of the Little Flock. He joined in the accusation of Watchman Nyi a couple of years ago, and he and Miss Tso Fu-ju are now apparently the two leaders of that indigenous group.

A four day evangelistic crusade in Taipei early in November resulted in nearly 200 decisions by Taipei college students for Christ, according to the Far East News Service (FENS).

77 of the 350 Presbyterian churches among Taiwan tribes people were either destroyed or severely damaged by typhoons Joan and Louise early in September. 18,000 people were left homeless along the east coast, and Church World Service has been active there in relief.

The Book of Acts has just been translated into the Bunun tribal language of Taiwan. FENS states that there are 48 Presbyterian churches operating in that tribe. Other Taiwan tribal languages in which books have been produced are the Tayal, Sediq, Amis, Paiwan and Drukai languages, and work is in progress on the language of the Yami people of Orchid Island (off the southern tip of Taiwan).

A further check of the news about Luther Shao substantiates our statement in the last issue that he and Mrs. Shao are alive and well. A woman in Nanking who knows the Shaos well, made this definite statement in a letter to Hong Kong not long ago. The news of his suicide, though apparently at the time authentic (and accepted by World Call as such), actually seems to have come by way of Taiwan.

The Three Self Patriotic Movement Changchun branch held a business and discussion session August 24-28 in the church on West Fifth Horse-road. 51 delegates were present. The chairman, Li Fang-yuan, made a report on the work accomplished during the past three years, and then a plan of work for the future was proposed. This plan was scrutinized carefully and pronounced workable (evidently organizations have been warned against adopting paper plans that are beyond the realm of possibility), and then officially adopted. A governing committee of 35 was elected, and this was supplemented by a standing or executive committee of 15. Li Fang-yuan was re-elected chairman. (This is the only item of specific church news in the whol of the September 21 issue of Tien Feng.)

A rather indirect item of news has come to us about Bishop Ting Kuang-hsun, to the effect that he is no longer President of Nanking Union Theological Seminary. He is still Bishop of Chekiang Province, but is working in a factory. Whether this means that he has fallen from favor, or only that he is working out the stint of manual labor demanded of everyone, is not yet clear.

In the January 19 Bulletin we quoted a statement from an article by Lu Wen in Tien Feng, to the effect that 150 church workers from Peking had been permanently assigned to manual labor in a farm commune. A Peking Christian leader doubts the accuracy of this estimate, saying that the only church workers who have been permanently diverted to industry are the unschooled type, such as some Salvation Army workers, for whom no place could be found in the united church program. Of the others who remain in the ministry, those over 70 have been retired, those between 60 and 70 are given writing assignments in lieu of factory work, and it is only those under 60 who must do some work on factory or farm, "but they only need to do it when it's convenient." What proportion of their time that requirement involves, he did not say

GENERAL NEWS

There has been a tightening up in the regulations governing the export from mainland China of daily papers and magazines. It may not be so easy in the future to get copies of Tien Feng. So far we have a complete file to the end of September for this year.

The summer and fall drought is said to have reduced the crop expected in Hupeh Province by 25%. Fukien, Kwangsi and Kwangtung have also been fighting a severe drought.

A November 21 despatch states that the bridge across the Yangtze River at Chungking has now been completed and the first trains have crossed the bridge. It is constructed to carry both railway and general traffic. It is 820 meters long.

The Library of Congress is continuing its microfilming of the more important Chinese Journals (See Bulletin for 4/27/59). To the 16 previously reported they have now added 20 more, journals in such fields as archaeology, library science, Chinese studies and various social sciences. A list can be secured from Photoduplication Service, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D.C.

The Asia Society (112 East 64th Street, New York 21, N.Y.) has reproduced a list of paper bound books on Asia, compiled and revised by the Center for East Asian Studies at Harvard. The Asia Society will send a copy on request.

The Peking People's Daily for October 16 published an apologetic article explaining why it had been necessary for the government to raise prices on such agricultural products as soy beans, peanuts, sugar, and beef. They make a great deal of a reduction in price in penicillin and streptomycin, to offset this rise in prices of staples. Their explanation, after shucking off the Communist phraseology, reduces itself to the old-fashioned economic idea of supply and dema

A series of articles in the Hupeh Daily last August shows clearly that the communal mess halls in a number of places have been under severe attack. The articles read as though all the people wanted the mess halls and were much displeased when their leaders closed them. However, reading between the lines, it seems clear that the leaders, knowing how their Communist bosses prized the mess halls as symbols of an advanced Communist ideology, would have been very reluctant to close them, and must have done so only under the strongest pressure from the people themselves.

The editor of Women of China, in the July 16 number answers a letter from a reader by strongly recommending the use of contraception. The report has been current recently that Communist China has officially disavowed birth control, but this article would seem to indicat that that is not true.

Work is actively proceeding on three railroad lines from Szechuan south: from Chengtu to Kunming, from Neikiang to Kunming (apparently a separate line), and from Chungking to Kweiyang. On the first of these three, the Shamulata Tunnel will be 6,300 meters long.